

REMARKS

A response to the pending Final Office Action of December 5, 2002 was filed on March 3, 2003. The Examiner issued an Advisory Action on March 17, 2003 indicating that the proposed amendment to Claim 10 had been entered, but that the rejection of all pending claims of the application was maintained. The Applicant presents this paper as a Preliminary Amendment to the Request for Continued Examination filed herewith.

This Preliminary Amendment cancels Claims 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 21, 23 and 45. This Preliminary Amendment also amends Claims 43 of the application by adding the limitations previously recited in now cancelled Claim 45 to Claim 43. Finally, new Claims 46 - 49 have been added to the application. The application now comprises Claims 6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 25 - 30, 43, and 46 - 49 with three independent claims and a total of nineteen claims. Therefore, no excess claims fees are required.

Support for New Claims

The Applicant submits new Claims 46 and 47 are supported in the specification at page 9, line 18 to page 10, line 27 and by figures 19 to 24. New Claim 48 is supported by Claim 13 as originally filed and new Claim 49 is supported by Claim 19 as originally filed. The Applicant submits that the new claims are supported by the specification and that no new matter has been added. Therefore, the Applicant submits that the new claims may be properly entered in the application.

Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application and allowance of the claims of the application as early as possible.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 12-0415. In particular, if this response is not timely filed,

the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 12-0415.

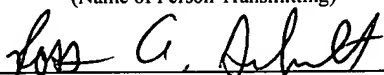
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April 7, 2003

(Date of Deposit)

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(Name of Person Transmitting)


(Signature)

4-7-2003

(Date)

Respectfully submitted,



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